

Questions & Answers

From the

Michigan Merit Examination Plans and Prospects Videoconference

April 27, 2006

Q1. *When will you publish training dates for November and December Administrator Training Workshop?*

A: The dates for the Test Supervisor, Back-Up Test Supervisor, and Test Accommodations Coordinator training will be published this summer – in July.

Q2. *Will training be offered via videoconference?*

A: Live training presentations will be conducted at several locations throughout the state. All Test Supervisors, Back-Up Test Supervisors, and Test Accommodations Coordinators will be required to attend one of the sessions as a team. A video will be prepared to present some of the information and will be available for use by Test Supervisors and Back-Up Test Supervisors to train staff in their local districts following the in-person training.

Q3. *Will MEAP Coordinators be allowed to attend administration training?*

A: Yes, district coordinators will be invited to Test Supervisor, Back-Up Test Supervisor, and Test Accommodations Coordinator training.

Q4. *If our Test Supervisor, Back-Up Test Supervisor, and Test Accommodations Coordinator attended training for the pilot MME, must they attend training again in the fall?*

A: Yes, there are many differences between the pilot and the operational Michigan Merit Examination (MME), including different schedules, different assessments procedures, different return of materials procedures, and different test components.

Q5. Will sites (schools) that have already been approved for the ACT Test at present, have to be approved again for the MME Testing?

A: Yes. It must be ascertained that the sites are capable of meeting ACT requirements during the school week.

Q6. Will all tests be timed?

A: Yes, all sections of the MME will be timed.

Q7. How long will each component of the test take?

A: Please refer to the chart below:

Spring 2007 Test Organization						
Day*	Assessment	Subject Session	Number of Parts	Total Items	Testing Time (minutes)	Estimated Time Required for Administration
Day 1 March 13 (Makeup March 27)	ACT Plus Writing	English	5	75 MC items	45	Total test time including -- check in, instructions, breaks, and collection of materials - 5 hours.
		Mathematics		60 MC items	60	
		Reading		40 MC items	35	
		Science		40 MC items	35	
		Writing		1 Prompt	30	
Day 1 Testing Time 205 minutes (3 hrs / 25 minutes)						
Day 2 March 14 (Makeup March 28)	WorkKeys	Reading for Info	3	33 MC Items	45	Total test time including -- check in, instructions, breaks, and collection of materials - 3 hours
		Applied Mathematics		33 MC Items	45	
	Michigan	Mathematics		14 MC items	20	
Day 2 Testing Time 110 minutes (1 hour / 50 minutes)						
Days 2 - 7 March 14 to 21 (Makeup March 28 to April 4)	Michigan	Science	3	46 MC items	50	Total test time including -- check in, instruction, breaks and collection of materials - 3.5 hours
		Social Studies		31 MC items and 1 prompt	50	
				26 MC items and 1 prompt	50	
One additional day during Days 2 - 7 Testing Time 150 minutes (2 hours / 30 minutes)						
*More detailed information about this schedule and the makeup tests given exactly 2 weeks later is available on the MME website				TOTAL Minutes	465	
				TOTAL Hours	7.75	

Q8. *Can a Test Supervisor and a test administrator be the same person, as is often the case in a very small district?*

A: Yes, but this is usually not desirable. Either the Test Supervisor or the Back-Up Test Supervisor must be available to deal with issues that may arise during testing. This is not possible if the Test Supervisor is administering the test as a room supervisor.

Q9. *Do all schools need to be a national Test Center?*

A: No. Although many schools may choose to be approved as a national test site, there is no requirement for them to do so. All schools must be approved as a state test site.

Q10. *Can we have a list of high schools that did the pilot testing this spring?*

A: Yes. Some of the pilot schools have expressed interest in being a resource to other schools in the state. A list will be made available and schools who have agreed to be a resource can be contacted. Certainly, staff from the pilot schools will be able to provide insight into their experiences, but many of the administration instructions for the operational MME will differ from the pilot.

Q11. *Will the OEAA secure website be utilized for MME as it is for MEAP? What will be different, if anything?*

A: The OEAA secure website will be utilized for the MME in much the same way as it is for the MEAP. It will be the focal point for MME score reports, as well as ACT and WorkKeys summary information. Many of the reports on the site will mirror the format of the new MEAP reports.

Hard copy reports that will be shipped to schools and/or students will include MME reports, along with the full complement of ACT and WorkKeys reports that schools would normally receive.

Q12. *Will Non-Public Schools get the required test establishment packages also during the week of Sept. 4, 2006? Do they need to follow different requirements if they wish to be a test center?*

A: Non-public schools will also be invited to become test centers. They will receive packages in the same time frame as public schools. Site requirements for non-public schools will be the same as those for public schools. However, non-public school test centers may not test home school students.

Q13. *Where do students test who are Home-Schooled or Non-Public School students?*

A: Home-schooled students must test at the public school in the district they reside. If a non-public school is approved as a test center, all of their students will test there. For those non-public students whose schools are not approved as a test center, they will need to travel to

one of the several test centers provided for them by the Michigan Department of Education, Office of Educational Assessment and Accountability.

Q14. *On the MME assessment schedule, it states that “Schools may select one testing day” from March 14-21 for Michigan Science and Social Studies tests. Please clarify if these must be given on the same day (back-to- back) or can be offered on two separate days?*

A: The Michigan Science and Social Studies components of the MME consist of three sessions and must be given on the same day, back-to-back.

Q15. *For regular ACT test-takers when will all application packets be due to ACT for the March 13th test date?*

A: For State Testing, ACT does not utilize a “registration process” as is done with National Testing. In advance of the March 13th test date, schools will receive two shipments of materials. The first will be a non-secure shipment that will include the ACT Plus Writing answer documents – the answer documents for State Testing include the demographic and non-cognitive interest inventory found in the standard National Testing Registration folder. In Michigan, schools will be responsible for having all students who will be part of the MME testing participate in a session prior to test day, to complete these items. The second shipment schools receive will include the actual test booklets that will be used. All of this will be fully explained during the fall training workshops.

Q16. *If a school offers the MME, is it required to offer the make-up, or can students go to an alternate site?*

A: Schools will be required to offer both the MME and the make-up. It may be possible to offer the make-up at an off-site location, but the off-site location will need to be approved and will need to be staffed by the school whose students are being tested.

Q17. *How is a student’s junior year defined? By minimum credits or social promotion (when a student entered into the 9th grade).*

A: Student grade levels are defined by high schools according to their district’s policy, generally by credits earned. For schools that are non-graded and have no policy to determine grade level, the MDE has established age-based requirements. Certainly, it is preferable that schools assign grade level according to their district policy.

Schools should be aware that the Grade 11 enrollment used to determine participation for Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) comes from the spring (February) Single Record Student Database (SRSD) submission. All students reported in Grade 11 in the spring SRSD should be tested.

Q18. *If students took the MEAP this year as 10th graders, will they need to take the MME next year?*

A: Yes, all 11th grade students must take the MME during the spring MME cycle during the 11th grade year, even if they have taken the MEAP High School Assessment during an earlier administration. In fact, even those students who were 11th graders during the current year, and remain so next year, will need to take the MME again next year.

Q19. *If a 10th grader (this school year 2005-2006) has passed all parts of the MEAP HST, will this student get the Michigan Merit Award Money?*

A: No. According to the Michigan Department of Treasury (which administers the Michigan Merit Award) students in the graduating class of 2008 are required to take the MME as an 11th grade student and meet the required performance levels in order to qualify for the Michigan Merit Award. Please refer all Michigan Merit Award questions to the Michigan Department of Treasury.

Q20. *How do students register for Retake tests? If through ACT, what about the other tests?*

A: Students will register through ACT for the Fall 2007 Retake using a voucher that will permit them to retest at no cost. This testing will occur on the October (Saturday) National Test Date. Students taking the Retake will need to take all components of the MME. They cannot take just the ACT, just the WorkKeys, or just the Michigan portion of the MME. For Day 2 & Day 2-7 (WorkKeys and Michigan MME Sections) schools will order materials via School House.

Q21. *Where will the Fall 2007 Retake tests be given?*

A: Students will take the Fall Retake on the national ACT Saturday administration in October. They will then take the WorkKeys and the Michigan components in school during the week following the Saturday administration of the ACT. In 2007, the Fall Retake national Saturday administration is October 27, 2007.

Q22. *I understand the Class of 2007 will have the opportunity to take the MEAP as a Retest in the fall of 2007. Will they also be able to retest in MEAP in the spring 2007? If so, will it be given at the same time as MME is given in the spring?*

A: Only 12th grade students will have the opportunity to take a MEAP retest in the fall of 2006. In the spring of 2007, they may take either the MEAP or the MME, not both. Most students who are 12th graders in the 2006-2007 school year will probably want to take a MEAP retest for the content areas they need to attain a level 1 or 2 in order to qualify for the Michigan Merit Award. If they take the MME, they will need to attain a level 1 or 2 in all content areas.

Q23. *Can Students retake the ACT on a national testing date and use that score to qualify for the MERIT Award?*

A: No, the ACT taken as a separate test will not qualify a student for the Merit Award. Only the Fall Retake of the MME on October 27, 2007 will be used to qualify for the Merit Award, along with the WorkKeys and Michigan components on the following week. Students will register through ACT.

Q24. *How do students register for the MME test? Are there time lines?*

A: See Response to Q 15. NOTE – Home-schooled students electing to participate in MME will do so through their district high school. Students from non-public schools that are not participating will be asked to register at one of the Auxiliary Test Centers. Information on this will be available at the fall videoconference.

Q25. *What will the score reports look like? Will a sticker be available to put on the transcript?*

A: MME score reports will look very similar to the new MEAP reports.. The student and school will also receive the standard reports for the ACT and WorkKeys. Transcript stickers (student record labels) will be provided for the MME, ACT, and WorkKeys.

Q26. *Since you will be offering free retakes, are you encouraging or requiring all High Schools to be an October test site?*

A: Schools are encouraged to become a national test site for the Saturday administration of the ACT, but are certainly not required to do so. All high schools will need to offer WorkKeys and the Michigan components in the fall, but students may test on October 27, 2007 at any of the ACT national test sites.

Q27. *Has the NCAA agreed to accept ACT scores administered as part of MME?*

A: Recently the NCAA introduced legislation that would allow for the use of state-administered ACT Tests in determining initial-eligibility for participation in Division I and Division II sports. Prior to this legislation only test scores achieved under national testing conditions on a national testing date could be used.

For Division II, this legislation has been adopted effective January 9, 2006. For Division I, pending final confirmation, this legislation will become effective on August 1, 2006.

Pending final confirmation and adoption of the Division I legislation, students entering college on or after August 1, 2006 will be able to use State-Administered ACT Test scores (such as in the Michigan Merit Examination) for determination of their initial-eligibility for both Division I and II.

Questions may be directed to the NCAA Clearinghouse at 877/262-1492.

Q28. *What happens when a student arrives late on testing date?*

A: The student will not be allowed to test if they are not properly admitted to the testing room prior to the beginning of the instructions.

Q29. *Is the MME Retake available to anyone?*

A: It is available to anyone who is (1) enrolled at a Michigan public or non-public school, a Michigan charter academy, or is home-schooled and resides in a Michigan school district **and** (2) is a 12th grader or an adult education student.

Q30. *2007-08 Grade 12 has two chances to retake (fall & spring) the MME and the state pays for the one retake? How do they pay for another chance? Can they take it and pay for another chance at the school?*

A: For a second Retake (third chance), the student must pay for the Retake. Fees and procedures for fee collection for the Retake are yet to be determined.

Q31. *If a student enrolls at your school after the application deadline, will they be able to test?*

A: Yes, there will be a process for handling students new to your school.

Q32. *What happens during the "Special Testing" window?*

A: The special testing window is used to administer accommodated versions of the test (both ACT approved and State Allowed Accommodations). The special testing window runs for two weeks beginning on the initial test date.

Q33 *An 11th grader took the MEAP in March 2006 and did not pass. The student does not have enough credits to become a 12th grader and so he remains an 11th grader for 2006-07. Does the student retake the MEAP in the fall even though he is not a 12th grader or take the MME in the spring?*

A: A student who is an 11th grader must take the MME assessment in the spring. The fall MME Retake is available only to 12th grade and adult education students. Also, see the response to question 29.

Q34. *Wasn't it okay for 10th graders to take 2006 MEAP test for dual enrollment purposes?*

A: Yes, spring of 2006 was the final opportunity for students to take the MEAP for dual enrollment purposes. Beginning in the fall of 2006, students who have not previously qualified for dual enrollment via the MEAP will need to take the PLAN or PSAT to qualify. It will be the responsibility of the local school district to offer the PLAN or ACT. The PLAN or PSAT will at district expense or, if determined by the local district, at the expense of the student, parent, or guardian.

Q35. *Will 11th grade students also be able to take the PLAN or PSAT for dual enrollment in fall 2006?*

A: Yes.

Q36. *Our school offers both the PLAN and PSAT tests to our students. Must the school pick which one will be accepted for dual enrollment or can the student pick which test if both are offered?*

A: Schools will be able to continue to offer both the PLAN and PSAT tests. The MDE will set passing scores on each exam that will qualify students for dual enrollment and students can take one or both exams in order to try to qualify.

Q37. *How are the current ethics guidelines for MEAP applicable for ACT/WorkKeys? (i.e.; 10 days before assessment no pre, no chats, maps etc in the classrooms)*

A: The current ethics document is being reviewed and will be revised as necessary for the components of the MME. However, the ten-day provision will likely remain, meaning that high schools will not be able to ethically administer practice tests ten days prior to the administration of the MME.

Q38. *What would you suggest as a post high school choice for a student passing the WorkKeys but not the ACT with a qualifying score?*

A: The OEAA cannot advise individual students regarding their post-high school choices. OEAA makes assessment data available to students, parents, and schools. While there is a wealth of information in the data made available, post-high school choices are best made considering a full spectrum of information that may include: parent and teacher observations; individual student skills, abilities, and interests; job shadowing, work, co-op or student intern experience, etc.

Q39. Both the ACT and WorkKeys assessments are constructed based on their own curriculum standards. How do Michigan's High School Content Expectations related to the ACT/WorkKeys standards? Should schools use both sets of standards to develop classroom instruction and assessment?

A: Even though both the ACT and WorkKeys tests are constructed based on standards developed by ACT, they are closely related to the Michigan high school standards and benchmarks. All three sets of standards should be used as points of reference by high school faculty as they work to improve their instructional programs.

Q40. How will MME testing of home-bound students be handled, especially given the strict rules of ACT (e.g., how do we certify a hospital room or a child's home)? We cannot simply deny them the opportunity to test so this needs to be addressed.

A: MDE and ACT will need to determine whether home-bound students will be able to participate in the MME.

Q41. If we suspend school for students not being assessed, have we offered a day of instruction?

A: According to the MDE State Aid Office, schools may qualify for state aid payments by having 75% or more of the students scheduled to be in attendance actually in attendance. If only 11th graders are scheduled to attend, and more than 75% do so, the school would qualify for state aid. However, the requirements for 1090 hours of instruction for all students still must be met. High schools should explore providing instructional opportunities for non-participating students outside of the high school, such as at a local community college or university. Students do not need to be in school to be participating in an instructional activity that counts for the minimum hours of instruction requirement.

Q42. If a school has a snow day on a scheduled testing day, what process will we use to reschedule testing?

A: Students will need to test during the makeup window.

Q43. Conflict of Interest - Is this restriction in place for 2006-07 only, or will this become a permanent restriction?

A: It is a permanent restriction until and unless it is redefined by ACT and/or the Michigan Department of Education. OEAA staff is not aware of any impending changes.

Q44. *Instructionally, I understand having 9th, 10th, 12th students making up their missed time if released, but does this not happen every spring with seniors (25% or more) which is not considered an issue?*

A: See the response to question 41.

Q45. *If ACT renders a group of tests as invalid as result of unintended violations of testing practices related to the ACT, will the test be rendered as not having been given for reporting of AYP?*

A: Invalid assessments yield no score and students would be classified as not participating for purposes of AYP.

Q46. *Have the cut scores been established for a student to be eligible for the Michigan Merit Scholarship or to be considered proficient?*

A: Cut scores are being reviewed now. It will be the responsibility of the OEAA to develop cut scores that are neither easier nor harder to obtain than those established for the MEAP high school assessment.

Q47. *Currently, all students entering career-tech programs in our ISD are administered the WorkKeys Reading and Math tests at the beginning of the 11th grade. Are there any restrictions regarding our administration of WorkKeys in relation to the MME planned for spring of the 11th grade and for the fall retest for 12th graders in subsequent years?*

A: Testing may not occur within 90 days of the MME test dates.